



friendship force  
WISCONSIN - MADISON



[www.ffwis.org](http://www.ffwis.org)

September 2020

## A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We transition to a new board in September, so this is my final President's message. I will remain on the board for another year as Past President but take on a more supporting role. I have so many people to thank for their support and efforts during this past year.

Thank you and welcome to Kathy Speck Kemeny, Doug Johnson, Mary Juckem and Diana Rodum for agreeing to be our officers for the year beginning in September. Thanks as well to Martha McGregor who has been our Secretary and before that Member at Large. Martha will be taking a break from the board. She has been a valuable voice on the board and will be missed. Stephanie Sorensen has done a fantastic job as Journey Manager in a challenging year with many cancellations and uncertainties. Gail Holmes and her team have kept us going with numerous and varied activities. I simply cannot thank them enough for all that they are doing.

Dorothy Baldwin has led Outreach at a time where it is nearly impossible to connect with others. Magdi Sebestyen has led our hiking group and provided valuable input as Member at Large. Peter Kaufman jumped into board activities this year and is sharing his skills. Agnes Rona has done a spectacular job as newsletter editor. When it became obvious that our journeys would not occur as planned, Agnes agreed to publish the newsletter every month so that we could stay more connected to all of you. Our membership team of Helen Ann Rugowski and Mary Lindquist tracked and stayed in touch with our membership. Donna Hussin is sharing her expertise our historian. A special thanks goes to Lise Skofronick who stepped up to support fund raising for FFI and to Janet Lonergan for always being available as a sounding board.

What makes this organization successful is all of you. You host, participate, lead, arrange events, plan journeys, write articles, provide meals, staff our booth at the International Festival and more. The friendships that we forge in Madison and the wonderful people that belong to FFI worldwide fulfill our mission and enrich all of our lives. Hopefully, we make the world a kinder, friendlier place.

In Friendship Always,

Sandi Wysock  
[sandrawysock@msn.com](mailto:sandrawysock@msn.com)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Monthly Board Meeting

The FFI Madison Board meets VIRTUALLY the second Wednesday of the month @ 12:30 pm

### Other Activities

September 9: Drinks in the Driveway. "Activities"

September 15: Let's Walk, Let's Hike. "Activities"

September 16: Bike Ride. See "Activities"

September 24: Second Harvest Food Bank "Activities"

October 11: Let's Walk, Let's Hike. "Activities"

October 12: Book Club. "Activities"

October 21: Adopt-a-Highway. "Activities"

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The beauty of Madison is available to all of us anytime.



On the way to Picnic Point

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

### A LITTLE COVID HUMOR RIGHT ON POINT FOR FFI

My husband purchased a world map and then gave me a dart and said, "Throw this and wherever it lands—that's where I'm taking you when this pandemic ends." Turns out, we're spending two weeks behind the fridge.



The key word is "temporary."



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## JOURNEYS

### JOURNEY PLANNING UPDATE

The Board is working on the journey matching calendar for 2022. Any plans for 2021 are somewhat theoretical at this time.

However, for those intrepid members who are planning any kind of travel, FFI has published a comprehensive travel check list developed based on information from the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization. We attached the 2-page checklist at the end of this newsletter.

### FFI VIRTUAL JOURNEYS ON FFI BLOG LINK

We remind you that all members can take virtual FFI journeys by looking at this link:

<https://blog.friendshipforce.org/virtual-experiences/>

This link is NOT on the regular International website. It is a wonderful way to travel and meet people during COVID. Once you connect on this link you should definitely slowly scroll all the way down to the end. It is full of many unique and interesting opportunities to learn about other countries, foods, and on-line activities. At the bottom are also links for tutorials for using WhatsApp and ZOOM.

### FFI PEN PALS

Another great experience available to FFI members is the Pen Pal program. Yes - real old-fashioned pen pals, the kind you write to and who write back to you.

FFI Pen Pals is a new way to "experience different views and discover common ground". Get matched up with another FFI member based on your interests – shared hobbies, common interests, a specific region or city, or a foreign language you'd like to practice. Or simply be surprised and get matched randomly! Then sit down and start writing – all you need is a pen, a piece of paper, an envelope and a stamp.

Here is how to find the link to Pen Pal.

1. On the FFI website homepage click "Virtual Experiences" link at the top of the page.
2. Click on the purple "here" link just below the 3 virtual experiences icons.
3. Scroll down the page and find [Friendship Force Pen Pals](#). Do a single click and a google document link will appear.
4. Information on the Pen Pal program and a registration link are in that document

## ACTIVITIES

### ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

Please join us **Wednesday October 21** at 10 am for our next highway clean up event. It's a great way to get outside, enjoy the cool fall weather, and make our roadsides look clean and beautiful, while enjoying each other's company safely. Please meet at the Middleton park and ride off Hwy 12 exit 249. Direct questions to Stephanie Vanden Bush [sljacobs2@gmail.com](mailto:sljacobs2@gmail.com) or 920-676-1441.

Please bring your own mask. Gloves and other supplies will be provided.

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On Sunday August 2nd a lively group enjoyed each other's camaraderie while picking up garbage along a 1 mile section of highway 12 in Middleton.



### BIKE RIDE

Join in for a DeForest/Windsor area bike ride on **Wednesday, September 16th** at 10 A.M. Rain date will be Friday, Sept. 18th. We'll meet at the Pick N Save parking lot in DeForest ( corner of Main St. and Vinburn Rd.; 621 S Main St.).

We'll ride along the Yahara River between DeForest and Windsor. Wind around some village bike paths and return for lunch at the Norski Nook in DeForest. The ride will be between 15 and 20 miles long and mostly (not relatively!) flat and winding. Helmets required, masks recommended and needed for restaurant and restrooms.

Please let Jan Hornback know if you are interested in joining:608-216-4454 / [jhornback@wisc.edu](mailto:jhornback@wisc.edu)

## ACTIVITIES

This hardy group biked the twenty miles from Belleville to New Glarus and back on August 19 on portions of the Badger State and the Sugar River Trails in perfect weather, with



lunch at Sugar River Pizza. Riders were, Cheryl Koerwitz, Helen Ann Rugowski, Diane Mertens, Larry Neuman, Maureen Kind and Jan Hornback. Contact Jan Hornback to join up for future rides or to suggest routes for biking.

### LET'S WALK / LET'S HIKE

We have put two new Let's Walk events on the calendar:

On **September 15** we will explore Owen Conservation Park on the West side of Madison, at 6021 Old Sauk Road. We will meet in the main parking lot at 11:00 a.m. <https://www.cityofmadison.com/parks/find-a-park/park.cfm?id=1305>

On **October 11** we plan to enjoy the beautiful fall colors of the University of Wisconsin–Madison Arboretum, with . over 17 miles of trails winding through various ecosystems and habitats. Parking site and meeting point to be determined later, depending on which part of the Arboretum looks most promising to walk through at that time of the year. See <https://arboreteum.wisc.edu>

Both locations have some gentle slopes, but nothing too demanding. Expect uneven surfaces, though, and some muddy spots, especially in the Arboretum. So, please wear sturdy shoes, or hiking boots.

In order to prevent spreading COVID-19 infections, please keep a distance of 6 feet from others, and wear a face-mask. None of these safety measures takes the fun away: we can still have wonderful conversations!

## ACTIVITIES

### *LET'S WALK / LET'S HIKE*

If you are interested in joining any of these events, please RSVP to [magdi.sebestyen@gmail.com](mailto:magdi.sebestyen@gmail.com), (cell phone: 608-213-5768), so she send you more detailed information, and a map of the park, or contact you in case of cancellation or rescheduling due to inclement weather, or for any other unforeseen reason.

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Here are some highlights of previous hikes:



**Tuesday, July 28** at Pope Farm Conservancy was a hot day with little shade for strolling the gently rolling hills. As a result, several people cancelled but these hardy souls carried on: Tamas Gaal, Doug Johnson, Maureen Kind, Marjie and Pete Marion, Kathy Speck, and leader Magdi Sebestyen.



We also enjoyed an additional "ad hoc" walk on **Friday, August 7** at Holy Wisdom Monastery thanks to Lise Skofronick. The Monastery offered "butterfly walks" on their prairie for 3 days, which sounded enticing. Kathy Speck and Tamas Gaal joined Magdi, who reports that the prairie was buzzing with all kinds of insects, and tan amazing variety of wild flowers.

## ACTIVITIES

### *LET'S WALK / LET'S HIKE*

If you are interested in more "ad hoc" walks that might pop up in the future with short notice please notify Magdi Sebestyen at [magdi.sebestyen@gmail.com](mailto:magdi.sebestyen@gmail.com), and your name will be added to the list of "ad-hoc-walkers". Of course, being on the list does not require any commitment, it just means you might get a few extra emails that are not sent out to the entire membership. You can either respond to them, and participate, or you can ignore them.

### *DRINKS IN THE DRIVEWAY*

We are offering an outdoor event on **Sunday, September 6, at 5:00** called **Drinks in the Driveway** (or on the lawn). Many Madisonians have been enjoying this way of gathering all summer.

Three hosts who have offered their homes for the events:

Sandy Drew at 7305 Cedar Creek Trail on the west side by Sunset Memorial Gardens on Mineral Point Road. Phone 833-5811, email [sdrew24@tds.net](mailto:sdrew24@tds.net).

Maureen Kind at 5901 Mayhill Drive off Raymond Road on the northwest edge of Fitchburg. Phone 274-6754, email [dmkind@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dmkind@sbcglobal.net).

Gail Holmes at 3457 Hargrove Street off Atwood Avenue/Monona Drive near Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Phone 249-1846, email [gjholmes@wisc.edu](mailto:gjholmes@wisc.edu).

Each host will determine how many can safely attend and be distanced by six feet. You can stand or sit in chairs provided by the host or bring your own chairs. Attendees will bring their own beverages containers and provide their own glass or cup if needed. No food will be served. Conversation could continue for about an hour or whenever the group decides to conclude.

Please contact a host by **Friday, September 4**, to request attendance. The host needs to accept you depending of the number of spaces available.

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## ACTIVITIES

### BOOK CLUB



The next meeting is October 17 at 7:00 pm, on Zoom or outdoors. We will read and discuss *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich. The book is based on the extraordinary life of Erdrich's grandfather, who worked as a night watchman and who carried the fight against Native Chippewa dispossession from rural North Dakota all the way to Washington D.C.

Please Email Reta Haring at [retaharring@charter.net](mailto:retaharring@charter.net) if you plan to attend the October 17 meeting.

### SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK

Second Harvest volunteers meet at the Food Bank the last Thursday of each month from 12:30 to 3:30. Upcoming date is Thursday September 24.

Your volunteer time is needed as great numbers of people in southern Wisconsin counties are facing daily food insecurity. Many Friendship Force volunteers are needed to prepare the Care Boxes. Not only does this give you an uplifting sense of fulfillment but it's really a fun activity! Let Lois Schulz know (608 243-9761 or [loisschulz1942@gmail.com](mailto:loisschulz1942@gmail.com)) by Monday, September 21, that you just can't wait to serve!

There is unlimited space for volunteers. New members are encouraged to participate, not only to help serve some of the most basic needs of our community but also to meet and get to know other members of our club.

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## BOARD NEWS/ACTIVITIES

### VOTING ON REVISIONS TO BY-LAWS

The proposed revisions to the by-laws were adopted by the members. The final by-laws will be available on the FFI Wisconsin Madison website.

### NEW BOARD TRANSITION

Board leadership will transition at the Board Meeting on September 9, 2020.

Kathy Speck Kemeny is the new Board President with Sandi Wysock as Past President. Doug Johnson is our new Vice President; Mary Juckem continues as Treasurer; and Diana Rodum is our new Secretary. Thank you to our outgoing officers for their dedicated service and welcome to our new officers in anticipation of continuing excellence and dedication.

## LOSSES IN OUR FAMILY

Diana C. Long passed away on July 24, 2020 at Agrace Hospice Care in Fitchburg.



Wisconsin natives, Diane and her husband Bernie indulged their adventurous sides camping with their children in their pop-up camper. They also were active members of FFI for many years, beginning in 1980. The Friendship Force provided a way to travel and make friends around the world. The goal was, "A World of Friends is a World of Peace". Diane and Bernie traveled on 15 International trips and hosted an equal number of times. After 9-11, when visas were difficult to obtain, they continued to make friends with fifteen domestic U.S. journeys as ambassadors and an equal number of hosting visits.

In addition to enjoying traveling and hosting, Diana also served as Board Treasurer and Bernie led several journeys as well as serving as President.

## **BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **Standing Committee Chairs**

Membership: Helen Ann Rugowski 608-841-1087

[haharrin@hotmail.com](mailto:haharrin@hotmail.com)

Journey Manager: Stephanie Sorensen 608-819-1846

[stevila@charter.net](mailto:stevila@charter.net)

Activities: Gail Holmes 608-249-1846 [glholmes@wisc.edu](mailto:glholmes@wisc.edu)

Outreach: Dorothy Baldwin 608-742-6493

[janddbaldwin@gmail.com](mailto:janddbaldwin@gmail.com)

Communications: Sandi Wysock 608-833-5326

[sandrawysock@msn.com](mailto:sandrawysock@msn.com)

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### **Activities Committee Members:**

Gail Holmes (chair) ([glholmes@wisc.edu](mailto:glholmes@wisc.edu)),

Audrey Liimatainen ([AMCL822@yahoo.com](mailto:AMCL822@yahoo.com)),

Lois Schulz ([loisschulz1942@gmail.com](mailto:loisschulz1942@gmail.com))

Leaders for specific activities are:

Adopt-A-Highway–Stephanie Vanden Bush

([sljacobs2@gmail.com](mailto:sljacobs2@gmail.com))

Bike rides – Jan Hornback ([jhornback@wisc.edu](mailto:jhornback@wisc.edu))

Book Club – Reta Harring ([retaharring@charter.net](mailto:retaharring@charter.net)) and

Marian Ehrenberg ([marianeh2014@gmail.com](mailto:marianeh2014@gmail.com))

International Institutes–Helen Ann Rugowski

([haharrin@hotmail.com](mailto:haharrin@hotmail.com))

Let's Eat Out (LEO)–Bobbie Vrooman

([bobbiesque@gmail.com](mailto:bobbiesque@gmail.com))

Dining on the 6<sup>th</sup> – Gail Holmes ([glholmes@wisc.edu](mailto:glholmes@wisc.edu))

Let's Hike/Let's Walk–Magdi Sebestyen

([magdi.sebestyen@gmail.com](mailto:magdi.sebestyen@gmail.com))

Second Harvest Food Bank–Lois Schulz

([loisschulz1942@gmail.com](mailto:loisschulz1942@gmail.com))

Travel/Day trips–Donna Hussin ([djhussin@yahoo.com](mailto:djhussin@yahoo.com))

**WISCONSIN FRIENDSHIP**  
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(608)238-1785

Secretary Diana Rodum

(608)203-5711

Treasurer: Mary Juckem

608-661-2810

Newsletter: Agnes Rona

781-910-1094

## Friendship Force International Health and Safety Guidelines for Friendship Force Journeys after COVID-19

We are living in unprecedented times as we navigate a new normal after the outbreak of COVID-19. Depending on where you are in the world, you may be considering home hosting again in the new future. Friendship Force International would like to offer some guidelines as our members get back into the habit of making new friends through Friendship Force Journeys.

We have developed the following checklist to prevent the spread of COVID-19 based on information available from the [Centers for Disease Control](#)\* (CDC) and the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO):

### **Personal Guidelines For Travel:**

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, or clean them with alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching your face (eyes, nose and mouth)
- Keep some physical distance between yourself and other people (about 2 meters apart)
- Consider covering your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when you are around others
- Cough or sneeze into your bent elbow, not into your hands.
- Dispose of used tissues in the trash; do not reuse disposable tissues
- Stay home if you do not feel well

### **Cleaning Guidelines When Preparing for House Guests:**

- Ventilate rooms before you clean. Allow fresh air to circulate for at least 20 minutes. If possible, leave all windows open during the entire cleaning process.
- Wear disposable gloves for routine cleaning and disinfection
- Clean surfaces using soap and water to remove visible impurities
- Use disinfectant (chemicals like bleach or alcohols) to kill germs on surfaces after cleaning with soap and water, Diluted household bleach solutions, cleaning products with at least 70% alcohol, and most common disinfectants registered by the Environmental Protection Agency are believed to be effective against the coronavirus.
- Frequently clean and disinfect high touch surfaces which include:

- Tables
  - Doorknobs
  - Light switches
  - Countertops
  - Cabinet handles and pulls
  - Coffee makers
  - Desks, nightstands, sofa tables
  - Phones
  - Keyboards
  - Toilets
  - Faucets/Taps
  - Sinks
  - Remote controls
- Clean soft surfaces such as sofas and curtains with soap and water or with cleaners appropriate for these surfaces. Vacuum regularly.
  - Launder towels and linens at the highest temperature possible according to the manufacturer's instructions
  - Clean and disinfect laundry baskets and hampers
  - Empty the vacuum cleaner after every cleaning
  - Clean and disinfect car door handles and seat belts

***Important: Never mix household bleach with ammonia or other cleaning solutions—doing so can release toxic gases.***

\*[Cómo limpiar y desinfectar su casa | CDC](#)

Our advice for hosting and traveling following this time of global pandemic is not really any different than what we normally advise; it is important for clubs to be in touch and to be transparent about the situation in the hosting community and the perceived safety there. We expect for ambassadors to be transparent and upfront about their health and mobility. Hosts and ambassadors understand that they take responsibility for their own risks involved with travelling and staying in someone's home. You can find more about this in the [Ambassador Agreement portion of the Ambassador Application](#) and [Host Application and Agreement](#).

Every ambassador and host should fill out and sign this application and agreement for every Friendship Force Journey. Ambassadors are required to have travel insurance. While travel insurance doesn't offer cancellation coverage for a trip canceled due to the fear of traveling because of a pandemic, it would offer medical benefits if a person were to get sick while traveling, regardless of the cause of the sickness.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or need additional information. We are all looking forward to getting back to traveling and meeting new friends. Hopefully sooner rather than later and of course, with everyone's safety and